

Biosecurity Risk Assessment

Step 1a – Characterizing the biological agents:

Looking at the biological agent criteria used early, are these criteria the same you would use if trying to assess the risk of this agent being targeted for malicious use? What additional criteria would you need? Are there criteria which you do not need? Please review both the criteria used in likelihood and those used to assess consequences. Once you have identified all the criteria you would use for assessing a biosecurity risk, please rank these criteria in order of importance.

Step 1b – Characterizing the threats:

What factors would you use to evaluate the threat or the potential adversaries who may target your agent for theft? Where would you find this information? What other factors would you need to consider in conducting a biosecurity risk assessment? Review the potential adversaries below and identify which are of the greatest concern.

- The Band of Mercy was established in 1973. They are a radical extremist group sympathetic to the animal rights movement have been active in the area. The group appears to have two goals: 1) the liberation of captive animals and 2) the destruction of capital necessary to conduct such research. However, the Band of Mercy's website instructs its followers to "take all necessary precautions against harming any animal, human and non-human."
- In the past few years, anti-Genetically Modified Organism activists have become active in the area. Although they have not damaged property yet, similar groups in neighboring countries have targeted facilities that conduct research on genetically modified organisms (GMOs), particularly newly constructed biotechnology laboratories.
- Last year, one graduate student in chemistry was arrested on charges of manufacturing methamphetamine one of the laboratories.
- The following staff has access to the all the laboratory space: faculty, research technicians, graduate students, housekeeping, facility staff, and the biorisk officer.

Step 2 – Characterizing the facility:

Using the provided information about the facility from the previous activity and the agent you were given, evaluate the likelihood the facility will be targeted and the potential of a successful theft.

Step 3 – Characterizing the risk:

Please review the factors you have identified and the results of the biosafety risk assessment to conduct a qualitative assessment of the biosecurity risks of your agent in the defined facility. (Please categorize the biosecurity risk as high, moderate, or low).

Please be prepared to present these results to the rest of the class.